

BRAIDED PATH PLAZA WITH POOL OF GENES

Just as the Guadalupe is braided with channels, the city that grew up along its banks is a rich mixture of cultures. At this monument, six braided paths symbolize the major ethnicities of the residents of San José, European, Native American, South American, African, Asian, and Pacific Islanders live side by side in this metropolis of 1 million, their paths crossing daily. In many ways, San José is an archetype of an international city.

Every ethnicity contributes to every other, broadening tastes and perspectives. A boy whose grandparents arrived here from Manila may be best of friends with the great, great grandson of an Ohlone chief. A myriad of religious and spiritual paths meet in San Jose's schools and workplaces. Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Christians, Hindus and others all freely practice their beliefs.

Follow any of the half dozen footpaths that begin here and you will find that, like the channels of the river, all six converge into a body of water. As the Guadalupe flows to the San Francisco Bay, these braided paths lead to a reflecting pool. The pool, etched with the first names of local children, is a metaphor for San Jose's profound diversity.